business. They did not appear to realise that now, if ever, was the time when their utmost efforts should be put forth to get their ships round quickly. They were still working as in peace time, each company with its private berths, and no one working for the common good, to help his neighbours, either by offering the use of an empty berth or by turning over a supply of bunkers which were not immediately required.

The result was that a great deal more time was being spent in Liverpool than was necessary, nor was the situation in America much better. Some of the large, fast ships such as the *Adriatic* were taking 50 to 55 days for the round trip, as against 25 days in 1916. This difficulty had to be dealt with by bringing Government pressure to bear on shipowners who were disposed to take too narrow and selfish a view of their responsibilities in a national emergency*

The difficulties arising out of the grouping of ships under the convoy system were also dealt with.

In January, 1918, a Convoy Committee was formed by the Liverpool shipowners, with the sanction of the Ministry of Shipping, and the Ministry also invited the New York and Port owners to form a similar committee.

Achievements of Convoy Committees and Port convoy officers

Port convoy officers, similar to those who had been appointed here, were sent to the United States in the spring of 1918, and the Ministry of Shipping's Report on Convoys states

that:—

" The average total stay of tramps in United States ports fell from 271 days in January to 16f days in September, while that of liners was reduced from 22-£ days to 14 days. The delay waiting for convoys which had been 3^ days for tramps, was brought down to an average of 2 days, and the